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OF THE SISTER ARTS; AN ESSAY.

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Omnes Artes, *quæ ad* Humanitatem *pertinent*, *habent quoddam* commune Vinculum; *& quasi* cognatione *quadam inter se continentur*.
Cic. pro Arch. Poeta.

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OF THE

SISTER ARTS, &c.

IF it be allow'd with *Cicero* that all *Arts* are *related*, we may ſafely conclude, that *Poetry*, *Painting*, and *Muſic* are cloſely ally'd. From this near Reſemblance to each other they have been commonly call'd the *Siſter Arts*, which is ſo great, that it is difficult to diſcourſe upon either of them, particularly on the two Firſt, without a mutual borrowing of *Images*, and *Terms*, inſomuch that one of theſe *Arts* cannot well be explain'd, without giving ſome Inſight into the other at the ſame Time.

Almoſt all the *Parts* of *Poetry* are found in *Painting*. *Harmony*, which is the *Eſſence* of *Muſic*, is, as it were, the *Dreſs* or *Cloathing* of *Poetry*; and *Painting* is a kind of *dumb Harmony*, which charms and ſooths us thro' our *Eyes*, as *Muſic* does thro' our *Ears*. *Poetry* is much nearer ally'd to *Painting* than to *Muſic*. *Lyric Poetry* approaches more to *Muſic*, than any other *Species* of it, as *Dramatic* and *Paſtoral* Poetry do to *Painting*. *Harmony* does the Office of a *Lucina* to the *Poet* and *Painter*, helping the Production of their Labours; and ſcarce any of thoſe who have ſucceeded in theſe *Arts*, have been inſenſible of the *Power* of *Sounds*.

The nearer the *Poet* approaches to the *Painter*, the more perfect he is; and the more perfect the *Painter*, the more he imitates the *Poet*, in drawing the *Manners* and *Paſſions* with *Life* and *Spirit*. The *Painter* is to *animate* a *Form*, and the *Poet* to lend a *Form* to *Sentiment* and *Diction*: One is to give *Life* to beautiful *Proportion*, and the other *Strength* and *Figure* to ſublime *Thought*: The *Painter*, *like Prometheus*, lights up a *Spirit* in the *Body*, while the *Poet* ſeeks a *Body*, to *maintain* and *ſupport* that *Spirit*; which is one of *Homer*'s greateſt Praiſes; for, by the *Fire* of his great *Genius*, he has given *Form* to almoſt all *Things*, and made them appear, as it were, *alive*.

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As theſe *Arts* proceed chiefly from the ſame Principles, *Imitation* and *Harmony*, ſo they are mutually aſſiſtant to each other, and ought to dwell much together; yet however they may be reciprocally oblig'd to each other, and agree ſo well in the main, they have their *ſeparate* Beauties too.

Poetry not only can expreſs the external Signs of the Operation of the Mind, which are ſo livelily repreſented by *Painting*; but alſo its fineſt *abſtracted* Thoughts, and moſt *pathetic* Reflections. *Painting* cannot convey its *Images* in ſuch *great Numbers*, and with ſo *quick* and *unwearied* a *Succeſſion* as *Poetry* does; and there are almoſt innumerable *Images* in *Poetry*, which *Painting* is not capable of forming, and which are often the greateſt Ornaments in *Poetry*. What *Painter* can give us the *Image*, for example, which *Horace* has done in theſe Words,

* *Et nova Febrium*
Terris incubuit Cohors.

This repreſents a *dreadful*, *active Image* to the Imagination, and is one of thoſe *many*, which are abſolutely out of the Province of the *Pencil*. A great *Painter* might, perhaps, form a very beautiful *Deſign* from the Deſcrip-

* Ode 3. Lib. 1.

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tion which *Virgil* gives of *Venus*, when ſhe diſcovers herſelf to *Æneas* in the firſt Book of the *Æneid*.

Dixit, & avertens roſea cervice refulſit,
Ambroſiæque comæ divinum vertice odorem
Spiravere: pedes veſtis defluxit ad imos,
Et vera inceſſu patuit Dea ——

But to reduce the *intire Image*, which theſe three or four Verſes convey to the Mind, to *Light* and *Shadow*, is impoſſible. What a Complexity of beautiful *Images* are here charm'd up into the Mind, as it were, by the *Magic* of a few Words? It is in the *brighteſt Ideas* that *Virgil* thus repreſents the *Tranſfiguration*, if one may ſo ſay, of this *Goddeſs*, while ſhe breaks forth from her Diſguiſe, into that Blaze and Refulgency of Heavenly *Beauty*, with all the *Enſigns* of her *Divinity*. What a happy *Attitude* has the *Poet* choſe for this Purpoſe? With what *Grace* and *Majeſty* do we behold her turning from *Æneas*, and brightning by Degrees into that glorious *Form* which confeſs'd her no leſs than the *Queen* of *Love* herſelf?

It may, perhaps, be ſaid in Favour of *Painting* and *Muſic*, that they may be look'd upon as *univerſal Languages*, being to be underſtood and comprehended every where; and that *Poetry* and *Muſic* have this Advantage over

ver *Painting*, that as many *Copies* may be taken of them as the *Printer* or *Tranſcriber* pleaſes, and that all of them ſhall be equally perfect with the *Original*; but there are much fewer good Judges of *Poetry* than of *Painting* or *Muſic*. *Muſic* is a great and very ſudden *Mover* and *Refiner* of the *Paſſions*; its *Operations* are *intenſe*; but as it conſiſts only of *Sounds*, to which no other *Ideas* are annexed, its *Impreſſions* are ſoon and eaſily *defac'd*.

It is certain, that, by univerſal Conſent, *Poetry* is the moſt *elegant* Pleaſure, and the moſt *pleaſing* Inſtruction; a more elevated and harmonious *Philoſophy*, inviting more ſweetly, and, conſequently, more powerfully to that true Wiſdom which makes our Happineſs. It is the Child of *Nature* and of *Science*, dreſs'd up in all the choiceſt of their Beauties; in all Ages it has liv'd, and has had its Nouriſhment with *Learning*, and with *Learning* too it has conſtantly decay'd and dwindled into *Barbariſm*. We are oblig'd to the *Poets* for the the moſt *lively Pictures* of human Diſpoſitions and Affections. [redacted] declares *Poetry more inſtructive* than *Philoſophy* itſelf; for it is not only deſign'd to divert and move. *Poets* were originally thoſe *Divines* and *Philoſophers* who *tam'd* Mankind, taught them *Arts* and *Sciences*, gave them *Laws* and fitted them for *Society*; and it is for this Reaſon chiefly, that *Poetry* has been always ſo much eſteem'd by

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the greateſt Men and wiſeſt *Philoſophers*. There is no Doubt, but that *poiſonous Morals* may more eaſily be inſinuated and recommended by the *Charms* of *Poetry* as well as *ſound Inſtruction*, which made a certain *Philoſopher* compare *Poetry* to the Land of *Ægypt*, equally abounding with *wholſome* and *unwholeſome* Herbs; but no body will impute this to *Poetry* itſelf; but to thoſe who make a wrong Uſe of it.

Tho' *Muſic* may give the Mind no *Inſtruction* immediately from itſelf; yet it helps greatly to *mend* the *Heart* in general, and elevate it to the doing of great and generous Actions: It diſpoſes the Soul for the Reception of ſuch Precepts as tend to *Humanity* and *Benevolence*; it charms and ſoftens us, like *Beauty*, which, tho' generally incapable of giving Inſtruction, ſerves to *refine* our *Paſſions*, and excite and raiſe us to the Performance of *brave* and *noble* Exploits. The *Grecians* in the Education of their *Children* took great Care that they ſhould be inſtructed in *Muſic*; they were of Opin[illegible] that it contributed much to the framing of them to *Virtue*, and we find, that for a long Time, they had no *Muſic* but what was proper for forming of Youth to *Morality*, and for *ſinging* the *Praiſes* of *Heroes* and great Men. *Hercules*, *Achilles*, *&c.* were all taught *Muſic*; it employ'd their leiſure Hours, when the Toils of War

War were ended; they ſung the *Gods* and Deeds of valiant Men. *Poets* and *Muſicians* were of old the ſame Perſons. *Socrates* apply'd himſelf to the *Lyre* towards the End of his Life; and his Diſciple *Plato* ſays, that *Muſic* has as much Influence on the *Mind* as *Air* has over the *Body* *Ariſtotle* thought it not below him to treat of that *Art*, and *Pythagoras* imagin'd it ſo uſeful, that he enjoin'd it as a Duty to his Scholars, to *compoſe* their Minds with it the firſt Thing they did in a Morning, and the laſt Thing when they went to ſleep at Night.

A *Painter* was of old look'd on as a *common Good.* Theſe *Artiſts* thought their *Works* too much conceal'd, if they were not exhibited in *public Places.* Some of them choſe rather to give their *Labours gratis* to their Country, than to ſet any Value upon them. *Zeuxis* is ſaid by *Pliny* to have done ſo, eſteeming his Productions invaluable, and the vaſt Prices we find the *Ancients* gave for *Pictures* and *Statues* are evident Arguments of the Veneration they held them in. The Art of *Painting* is not ſo eaſy, or ſo mechanical a Thing as ſome ſeem to imagine. To become a good *Painter*, a great *Genius* is requiſite, ſound *Judgment* and a fine *Imagination*, joyn'd with long Practice, Patience and Induſtry. The *Painter*, as well as the *Poet* muſt be an *Enthuſiaſt* in his *Art*, to ſucceed in it as he ought; his Mind

muſt be turn'd for a true Reliſh of what is *great*, *beautiful*, and *ſurprizing*; he ought to have a *quick* and *lively* Diſcernment, and muſt be eaſily ſtruck with the *Beauty* and *Proportion* of all the Objects he meets with. A *Painter* muſt ſacrifice almoſt all his Time to his *Art*, and ſcarce let a Day paſs without *doing ſomething*; he ought to *love* his *Profeſſion*, and prefer the *Truth* and *Perfection* of it to any *Intereſt* beſides. He muſt have an *Idea* of *perfect Nature*, and his Buſineſs ſometimes may lay out of *Nature* itſelf, tho' not ſo often as the *Poet*'s. The *Diſpoſition* of the *whole* requires great *Judgment*, as well as it does, before that, to chuſe a *proper Subject*; not is it the leaſt Secret in his *Art*, to know when to *leave off*, for which *Apelles* was ſo much commended.

Some of the Ancients deriv'd the original Ideas of theſe Arts immediately from Heaven itſelf, ſo high was the Opinion they had of them.

It is not very material to know, which of theſe *Arts* was firſt produced. *Hieroglyphicks* ſeem to have been the earlieſt *Painting* as well as the firſt, and moſt ancient Way found out to tranſmit the Knowledge of Things to Poſterity, before the Invention of *Letters:* It is eaſy to conceive, that the *firſt Eſſays* of this *Art* were very rude and imperfect.

The firſt *Poetry* we hear of was at Feaſts and Sacrifices in the earlieſt Ages after the Labour and Toils of the Harveſt and Vintage was ended. In theſe ancient Aſſemblies were ſung the Praiſes of the *Gods* and great *Men*; ſo that, 'tis probable, *Muſic* muſt have been born at the ſame Time with this rude Kind of *Lyric Poetry*, and proceeded at firſt from a certain Fulneſs of *Heart*, from a Kind of *Exultation*, and overflowing of *Joy*, and *Mirth* on theſe Occaſions. *Muſic*, perhaps, afterwards when the *Paſſions* of Men grew more *refin'd*, was made uſe of upon Occaſions of Sorrow, at the Funerals, or Death of Kings, great Captains, *&c.* and in Private, to ſooth the Grief of particular Men for the Loſs of their Friends, Country, or whatever was dear to them; Lovers, Captives, and ſuch as were in Sorrow and Affliction found their Conſolation in it: It at length became more familiar, and frequently us'd; but it is likely, it was a conſiderable Time before it was ſtrong enough to go alone, if we may ſo ſay, and to be utter'd without Words. *Vocal Muſic* was certainly long uſed before *Inſtrumental Muſic* of any Kind was found out; but it ſeems, that *ſtring'd* Inſtruments were invented, at leaſt perfected, before *Wind Muſic*. *Vocal Muſic* has always been the *moſt eſteem'd* of any other Kind, and the moſt difficult to bring to Perfection; and, as it is the moſt *natural* to

Mankind, ſo it is the moſt *pleaſing* and *agreeable*. It is probable that *Martial Muſic* is almoſt as old as *War* itſelf.

The firſt *Painters* began only with one Colour, then another was added, a third, and ſo on; in like Manner, the *Dramatic Poets* introduced but *one* ſingle Perſon, at the beginning of *Tragedy*, upon the *Stage*, after that, they brought in a *ſecond*, and, at laſt, they were increas'd to *three*; but this Addition to *Tragedy*, which was originally purely a *Chorus*, and *Hymn* to the *Divinity*, conſtituted its true *Form* and *Perfection*, whereas, the *Variety* of *Colours*, on the contrary, haſten'd the *Decay* of *Painting*. The *Painters* ſoon began to depart from the *Juſtneſs*, and *Severity* of their *Art*; they found they could pleaſe at a cheaper Rate with the *Pageantry* of *Colours:* The Merit of their *ſeverer* Labours was known but to a few; but the *Splendour* of their *Colours* attracted the Eyes of the *Multitude*, and the *Painters* were themſelves debauch'd by it by Degrees, and loſt their former true *Taſt*.

All theſe *Arts* have travel'd to us from the *Eaſt*, as indeed all *Learning* has done. *Painting* in *Ægypt* was at firſt rude, nor did it attain its *Perfection* till it was brought into *Greece*. The Schools of *Athens*, *Sicyon*, *Rhodes*, and *Corinth* were reckon'd the principal *Academies* for *Painting* amongſt the *Greeks*.

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According to *Pliny*, this *Art* was already brought to Perfection in *Greece*, about the Eighteenth *Olympiad*; it was in its higheſt Glory about the Time of *Alexander* the Great; but degenerated, when the *Roman* Empire flouriſh'd under *Auguſtus*, at which Time, *Poetry* was in its Hight in *Italy*; for theſe *Arts* have not always flouriſh'd together. Some Time after that, *Painting* broke forth again in its former Splendour in the Reigns of ſome ſucceeding *Emperors*, till the *Hunns* overrunning *Italy*, entirely deſtroy'd it with all other *Arts*, and *Learning*. In the *Fourteenth*, *Fifteenth*, and *Sixteenth* Centuries it recover'd itſelf, and came to a great Hight of *Perfection*. *Titian*, famous for his *Colouring*, was the firſt of the *Venetian* School that began to *adorn* his Works. *Coreggio*, celebrated for his *Graces*, did the ſame in *Lombardy*; as likewiſe did *Raphael* in the *Roman* School, noted for his *Deſigning*; *Carracio*, eſteem'd for his *Contours*, or *Out-Lines* at *Bologna*, and *Andrea del Sarto* at *Florence*. But the *Roman* School neglected *Colouring* thro' their eager Imitation of the *Proportion*, Juſtneſs of *Deſign*, and *beautiful Nature*, which they found in the *Remains* of the *Ancients*. The *Painters*, who ſaw not thoſe *Remains* of *Antiquity*, had always ſtill a good deal of the old, *Gothic*, barbarous Style in their Works. At the *Recovery* of theſe *Arts* in *Europe*, *Painting* was much before-

beforehand with *Poetry*; for *Poetry* requires ſo much more *Learning*, and ſo many more *Arts* to bring it to *Perfection*, that it was obliged to wait for the *Revival* of all the *Parts* of *Learning* before it could make any Figure.

The *Moderns* ſeem to have ſurpaſs'd the *Ancients* in *Muſic* to ſo great a Degree, that they may be ſaid, in ſome Meaſure, to be the *Inventers* of it; ſo great appears the *Difference* to have been between the *old*, and *new Muſic*: For in the Beginning amongſt the *Greeks* it was very low, nor does it appear, that the *Ancients* had in their *Concerts* any *Variety* of *Parts*, except the ſame *Parts* may be called various, when they are *play'd* or *ſung* an *Octave* higher or lower. As for Example, when a *Man* and a *Woman*, or *Boy* ſing the ſame Thing together; for there is *naturally* between the *Voice* of a *Man* and that of a *Woman* or *Boy*, the Difference of a *Diapaſon* or *Octave*. So far *Nature* directed them; afterwards they found out the *Conſonances*, as the *Diateſſaron*, the *Diapente* or *Diapedeſis*; and all the *Greeks* and *Latins* who have writ of *Muſic* from the earlieſt Times have never treated of any Thing in their Books beyond the *Nature* of theſe *Conſonances*, till *Boëthius*, an accurate Interpreter of the *Ancients*, collected, examin'd, explain'd, corrected, and reconcil'd their *Opinions*; but advanced nothing of himſelf, treading directly in their Footſteps: He gave us

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the *Characters* of *Sounds*, in the Place of which we have now our *Notes*. Two Hundred Years after him *Beda* writ two *Treatiſes*, one of the *Theory* and another of the *Practice* of *Muſic*, nor did he, any more than *Boëthius*, exceed the Bounds of the *Ancients*. He has given us, however, the *Forms* of the *Notes*, and the *Keys*, as likewiſe the *Muſical Scale*, conſiſting of *Lines* and *Spaces* as uſed in the *Church* after the *Gregorian* Method. However, *Muſic*, as to it ſelf, was much in the ſame imperfect State, and made no conſiderable Advances, 'till about the End of the *Tenth Century*, when *Guido Aretinus*, a *Benedictin* Monk, and an excellent Muſician, having carefully examin'd the Books of the *Ancients* upon this Subject, added to what they had done, and inſtituted a *better* and *eaſier Method* of *Muſic:* To this Man *Poſterity* owes the *Perfection* of *Muſic*; for tho' it was not he who altogether perfected it, he open'd the Way to others who have done it ſince. About the *Thirteenth Century* flouriſh'd *Franco*, another *Muſician*; and after him, in the *Fourteenth Century*, *Jo. Tinctoris*, *Franchinus Gaffurius*, and others; by whoſe *Labour* and *Writings* both *Theorical* and *Practical Muſic* was wonderfully improv'd. At length one *J. Zarlinus* publiſh'd a Book of *Muſic* in *Italian* at *Venice* in the Year 1580, in which he ſurpaſs'd all thoſe who went before him,

and brought *Muſic* to much greater *Perfection* than it had yet arrived at; but, however, not to that Hight in which we now have it. Thus we find how long *Muſic* remain'd in its ancient *Simplicity*. However perfect the Art of *Muſic* may be at this Day, it is confin'd to the more *Weſtern* Parts of *Europe:* In the Countries where it had its *Birth*, it is in a much worſe State than it was amongſt the *Ancients*, and by all the beſt Accounts we have of the more *civiliz'd* and *polite Nations* of the *Eaſt*, this *Art* is in a very low *Condition* in that Part of the World, and yet they aſcribe to it as wonderful Effects as the *Ancients* did to theirs; and if we may believe the moſt celebrated *Authors*, who have written of the *Savages* of *America*, even their *Muſic*, however rude it may appear to us, is in ſo great *Credit* amongſt themſelves, that they rarely make Uſe of any other *Medicine*, and think their *Labours* ſufficiently *reliev'd* by it.

The *Moderns* may glory to have improv'd upon the ancient *Painters* by their Invention of *Copper Plates*; in their Knowledge of *Colouring*, of the *Ciaro Oſcuro*, and of *Perſpective*. What the *Ancients* ſeem moſt to have excell'd us in, is *Purity*, *Eaſineſs*, and a beautiful and natural *Simplicity*, both in *Poetry* and *Painting*. The farther we look into paſt *Ages*, the more *true*, *ſimple* and *natural*

we

we find their *Productions* of all Kinds: Every *Age* has by Degrees degenerated from the ancient *Simplicity*; the *Romans* had leſs of it than the *Grecians*, and we have little, or none of it remaining with us.

Poetry and *Painting* propoſe the moſt *beautiful* Works of *Nature* for the *Objects* of their *Imitation*: *Art* alone conceals her *Beauties*; a *Genius uncultivated*, and without *Art*, ſhews her, as it were, thro' a *Veil*, but confuſedly, and to Diſadvantage, in ſuch a Manner as we regret the imperfect View we have of her; but where *Art* and *Genius* are happily *united*, they ſend her forth beauteous, amiable, and attended with the real *Graces*. *Art*, however, is to be employ'd with Caution, and conſider'd as the *Handmaid*, or *Servant* of *Nature*, whoſe Office it is to heighten, and improve the *Beauties* of her *Miſtreſs*, and, not by dreſſing her up *fantaſtically*, to hide her *Charms* in ſuch a *Complexity*, as the wrong Judgments of ſome have miſtaken for *Ornament*. Better is *Nature*, *looſe* and *unattir'd* in all her *Wildneſs*, and *Luxuriancy*, amidſt a Croud of *Errors*, than *bury'd* in the moſt exact *Labours*; for if ſhe *appears* at all, it is to *charm* us.

The Misfortune is, that *Fancy* and *Judgment* are very differently employ'd; while the *Firſt* is buſy'd in *throwing* Things *together*, the *other* is perpetually *dividing* them again.

Fancy importunately *intrudes* upon you her *Ware* of all Sorts; *flatters*, and *ſooths* you, and *ſollicites* your Reception of them; *inſinuates* her *ſelf*, and *Goods* into your *Favour*, and enhances the Worth of whatever ſhe expoſes to your View; 'till *Judgment*, that ſtern and rigid *Umpire* between you, examines them againſt the Light of *Reaſon*; rejects thoſe; reforms theſe; throws others away as falſe, and unſound; receiving what he *likes* beſt at the loweſt *Price* he can; and yet notwithſtanding his great *Caution*, is ſometimes egregiouſly *miſtaken*, and *refuſes* the greateſt *Beauties*, when he takes moſt Pains not to be *impos'd* upon. So hard a Thing it is, to make a wholſome *League* between theſe two *Oppoſites*, which, however, are ſo *neceſſary* to each other.

Painters as well as *Poets* are not only to chooſe what is *moſt beautiful* in *Nature* to imitate; but they are likewiſe to chooſe out of thoſe *Beauties*, ſuch as are moſt proper for, and agree beſt with their reſpective *Arts*; for, there are ſome Subjects fitter for *Painting*, and others for *Poetry*, which may admit of *Imitation* in either *Art*. *Ariſtotle*, and *Horace* after him, adviſe the *Poets* to chooſe their Subjects out of known *Fables*: 'Tis plain, the *Painters* have much more Need of following that *Rule*.

The Choice of a Subject being thus happily made, the *Artiſt* muſt be equally careful to *range* all its *Parts* in their proper *Order*, diſpoſing each where they will be moſt *ſurprizing* and contribute moſt to the *Beauty* of the *whole:* He ſhould reſpect the future Perfection of his Work in the very *Embryo* of his Deſign, that every *Part* may ariſe from the ſame Foundation, and in that *juſt Order*, which *Nature* herſelf obſerves in her *Productions*; thus we ſhould conceive all at once, and have a *Satisfaction* like that which ariſes from the happy *Combination* of the ſeveral *Parts* of a *Conſort* of *Muſic*.

Painters, as well as *Poets* ought to chooſe *warm* and *affecting Subjects*. It is an Inſtant of Time only which an *Hiſtorical Piece* repreſents, and that *Repreſentation* muſt be *active*, and *paſſionate*, or it will appear but *dead* and *cold*; ſo likewiſe muſt the Subject of a *Tragedy* be full of *Spirit*, and move the *Affections* briſkly, or elſe, as it propoſes an *immediate Action*, it will be as *languid*, and *dull* as the other. Thus *Dramatic Poetry* is that Part of *Poetry* which neareſt reſembles *Painting*, not only becauſe it exhibits the very *Action* itſelf; but becauſe it aims more at the *Paſſions* than *Epic*, or any other Kind of *Poetry*; for *Epic Poetry* works ſlowly, and arrives at its *End* thro' a long *Series* of *Things* and *Examples*, and this is one of *Ariſtotle*'s

Reaſons why he prefers *Tragedy* to *Epic Poetry*, as performing its Work in *leſs Time*, and conſequently, *more intenſively*.

In *great Works* we don't ſo much conſider what is *accurately finiſh'd* in each ſingle *Part*, regarding rather the *Beauty* of the *whole*; but *ſmaller Works* in *Poetry*, and *Pictures* ought to be exquiſitely *finiſh'd:* They have not *Length*, or *Copiouſneſs* enough to hide their *Faults*, or excuſe their *Imperfections* by the Number of *Beauties* which a *greater Work* might be capable of, where little *Omiſſions* are ſometimes even of Uſe to ſet off great *Beauties:* Beſides, theſe little *Subjects* require all *foreign* Ornaments that may be *conveniently* introduced to ſupport them.

The *Subject* ought to be *clear* and *unconfuſed*; neither too *big* nor too *little*, that the Mind may *comprehend* it all with Pleaſure, and, at the ſame Time, not too *eaſily*, and all at once. A *Play*, or *Picture* may have *too many Perſons* in it; and an *Epic Poem* may be embarraſſed with too great a *Variety* of *Incidents*.

The different *Figures* which compoſe a *Picture*, as well as the different *Parts* which compoſe each *Figure*, ought to conſpire to form one, entire *whole:* the ſame Thing, in Effect, is to be obſerv'd in *Poetry*, where every Thing is vicious, that does not neceſſarily, or probably

probably conſpire to the *Unity* of the *Compoſition.*

There are ſome *Incidents* which are not proper to be expos'd or introduced either on the *Stage* or in the *Tablet.* A *Picture* may be too *horrid*, as well as a *Tragedy*; and ſuch *Incidents* as *offend* the Senſe, or *ſhock* in any Manner, ſhould be perform'd behind the *Scene*, or caſt at the Back of the *Picture*, where the *Subject* will admit of it: Where it will not, that *Subject* is better neglected, as improper for *Imitation.*

Our *Religion* affords *properer* Subjects for *Painting* than for *Poetry*; nor can any great *Succeſs* be expected from the *Subject* of an *Epic Poem*, which admits not of the *Ornaments* of the *Machinery* drawn from the *Heathen Mythology*; but the mingling of the *Profane*, and *Chriſtian Syſtems* together, which ſome of our moſt famous modern *Poets*, and *Painters* have not ſcrupled to do, is both *monſtrous*, and *indecent*; and notwithſtanding ſome have ſtood up with *Warmth*, (perhaps with more *Zeal* than *Reaſon)* for the Introduction of *Religious Subjects* into the *greater Poetry*, they will not be found either ſo fit for the *Drama*, or *Epic Poetry*, as for the *Lyric.* They who would join *Poetry* to their *Devotion*, can do it no Way more ſublimely, and properly than by falling into the ancient Way of *Hymns:* It is to this Kind of *Poetry* that we owe moſt Part

of

of thoſe *great* and *ſublime* Paſſages with which the *Scripture* ſo abounds.

The ſame Rules which *Ariſtotle* lays down as neceſſary for the *Poets* to obſerve in the Formation of the *Manners* or *Characters* are equally inſtructive to the *Painters.* 'Tis firſt requir'd, that they be well *denoted*; that the *Character* intended, ſhould ſtand manifeſtly *expreſs'd* and *diſtinguiſh'd*; which is of the moſt Importance, and the Foundation on which the other *Rules* are grounded. The next *Quality* deſir'd in the *Manners*, is, that they be *agreeable* to the Age, Sex, Country *&c.* of the *Perſon* repreſented. Another *Condition* mention'd, is that they may be like thoſe of the *Perſon*, whom they are intended to repreſent, whether it be an *Ajax*, or an *Ulyſſes*, an *Alexander*, or a *Cæſar*, or any other famous Perſonage, eminent in Story. The laſt *Precept* which this *Philoſopher* lays down for the *Manners*, is that they be *equally maintain'd*, thro' the whole *Subject*, whether taken from *Hiſtory*, or purely *invented.* The *Poets* in the forming of their *Characters*, as well as the *Painters* are not to copy from Particulars; but from the *Idea* of *Nature* in general: They muſt *draw* from the *original.* Not what *Nature* does in her more *common* Productions; but what ſhe does *ſometimes*, *may*, or *ought* to do, ſhould be the *Example* of the *Artiſt. Leonardi da Vinci* in his Treatiſe of *Painting*,

gives

gives Rules altogether conformable to this, propoſing in general the moſt remarkable *Characteriſticks* of Youth, Age, *&c.* to the Conſideration of the *Painters:* He is ſo very exact in Relation to the *Manners*, as to require, that the *Attitude* of a *Figure* be ſo conducted in all its Parts, that the *Intention* of the *Mind* may be ſeen in *every Member*. The ſame judicious *Painter* obſerves, that the *Motions* of the *Figures* ſhould always ſhew the Degree of Strength, which they may be reaſonably ſuppos'd to employ in their reſpective *Actions*. Thus let the *Poet* proportion the *Emotion* and *Paſſion* of his *Perſon* to the *Subject*, and preſent *Circumſtance*, which is too often neglected: *Similes* and *moral Reflections* are very common upon the *Stage* in the Hurry of a *Surprize*, or *Fight*; while *Rage*, and *Fury* are acted in *Cabinets*, and ſolitary *Woods*. The *Poet* ought to conſider in every *Sentence* whether his *Perſon* ſpeaks from the Bottom of *Nature*, or not, and to ſtudy the various *Motions*, and *Alterations* of the *Mind* as attentively as the good *Painter* does thoſe of the *Body*; for as the *Painter* characterizes his *Figures* by *Attitudes*, and *Features*; ſo does the *Poet* characterize his *Perſons* by *Sentiments*, and *Actions*.

As all Things in a *Tragedy*, or *Heroic Poem* ſhould contribute to illuſtrate the *Hero*, ſo in a *Picture* nothing ought to be made ſo

ſhining and conſpicuous, as to divert the Eye from the *principal Perſon*, which, in either *Art* muſt be placed in the moſt *eminent* Light, and be the moſt *exactly* finiſh'd. *Ariſtotle* adviſes the *Poets* to imitate the *Painters* who preſerve the *Similitude* in *adorning* it. *Homer* has drawn *Achilles*, inexorable, fierce and cruel; but he has mingled with that, ſuch a Magnanimity, and generous Concern for his *Friend*, that we are *forc'd* to *admire* him.

'Tis by the *Sentiments* that the *Manners* or *Characters* are denoted. Let the *Artiſt* improve his *Mind* by ſtudying what the beſt *Authors* both of the Ancients, and Moderns have written, and furniſh his *Imagination* with the *Examples* of ſuch famous *Men* as are recorded in *Hiſtory*, and from thence draw forth the *Ideas* of his *Heroes*, and *Thoughts* proper for great *Perſonages:* Let him thus inrich himſelf with ſublime *Sentiments*, and ſublime *Words*, and *Expreſſions* will follow of Courſe.

The *Diction* in *Poetry* anſwers to the *Colouring* in *Painting*, and its great *Lights*, and *Shadows* are as the *Ornaments* of *Language*; and as it is obſerv'd, that ſuch of the *Painters* as are particularly famous for their *Colouring*, are ſeldom good *Deſigners*, ſo it may be remark'd amongſt the *Poets* and other *Writers*, that they, who aim at being carefully *finiſh'd* in their *Style*, and are very *curious* and

exact

exact in their *Words*, have rarely any Thing *great*, and *ſolid* in their *Compoſitions*.

Poets, and *Painters* never gratify more the Obſervers of their *Works*, than when they expreſs themſelves not ſo fully, but that theſe may find Matter enough to exerciſe their own *Imaginations* upon: We are agreeably flatter'd by ſuch *Diſcoveries*; and it is for this Reaſon, that the *Sketches*, or unfiniſh'd *Deſigns* of ſome great *Maſters*, which are but lightly *touch'd*, ſeem ſometimes to have more *Spirit*, and often *pleaſe* more than ſuch as are perfected.

A *Break*, or *Pauſe* in *Poetry* is ſometimes more *ſignificant* than any Thing, that might have been ſaid; ſo in *Muſic*, a *Reſt* in its proper *Place* has often a wonderful *Effect*, and from the *Beauty* of its *Surprize*, makes the *Suſpenſion* of *Harmony* itſelf agreeable. The Silence of *Ajax*'s Shade to *Ulyſſes* in *Homer*, and that of *Dido* to *Æneas*, which *Virgil* has copy'd from the former, are eſteem'd Maſter Strokes of this Nature in *Poetry*.

Eaſe and Freedom both in *Writing* and *Painting*, like *good Nature*, *excuſe* a great many *Faults*, which in ſuch Caſes are rather imputed to *Neglect*, or to the *Impetuoſity* of *Genius*, than to the *Inſufficiency* of the *Artiſt*: This *Eaſe* in Execution, which ſome call *Happineſs*, may proceed ſometimes from a natural *Diſpoſition*; but more commonly from

Art well conceal'd, and, like our *Happineſs* in Life, is oftner the *Effect* of *Management* and *Diſcretion*, than of *meer* good *Fortune*.

The ſame *Attitudes* are not to be repeated in a Piece of *Painting*, or the ſame *Expreſſions* made frequent Uſe of in *Poetry*. *Leon. da Vinci* ſays, that a *Painter* by diſregarding the *Diverſity* of Proportions, ſeems to caſt all his *Figures* in the ſame *Mould*, which he will have to be a Fault of the firſt Magnitude: In either *Art* there muſt be *Variety* to pleaſe.

Whenever a *Picture* is very much *inrich'd*, we may reaſonably ſuſpect that the main *Deſign*, and *Execution* are *poor*, and that the *Painter* endeavours, by this Means, to hide his *Imperfections*. *Theatrical* Ornaments, and pompous *Diction* are often employ'd to do the ſame good Office to bad *Poets*.

There are at this Day very few or ſcarce any Remains of the *Paintings* of the *Ancients*; but many of their fineſt *Statues* as perfect, and beautiful, as when they came out of the *Artiſts* Hands; from whence we may obſerve, that *Sculpture* has the ſame Advantage over *Painting*, that the dead learned *Languages* have over the fluctuating, unfixt *Tongues* now in Uſe; for as the Traces of the *Pencil*, and *Colours* in *Painting* fade quite away by Time, ſo do the *Words* of theſe *Languages* in a few Ages become ſo *obſolete*, that it is with the greateſt Difficulty that their meaning is

then

then to be traced, if at all discover'd. Perhaps there is no *European* Language so exposed to *Changes*, and *Innovations* as our own: It is to be hop'd, that we only adopt the *Flowers*, and *Graces* of other *Languages*; and thus this Liberty of *borrowing* from every *Tongue* we *hear*, will become of the greatest *Advantage* to our own.

Besides the Observance, or Neglect of the foregoing *Rules*, there are several *Accidents* which conspire to support, or ruin these *Arts*, which, like *tender* Plants, are too delicate to flourish in all *Seasons*, and in every *Place*: They require *generous* Encouragers, and Protectors; uninterrupted Quiet, and Leisure; Retirement, and Solitude; they are the Daughters of *Peace*, and are soon alarm'd, and frighten'd away by the rude Voice of *Discord*, and contending *Factions*; but however they may be *lull'd* to sleep by *Luxury*, or *Sloth*; or *starv'd* for Want of due *Warmth*, and *Encouragement*, they are always to be waken'd again, and recover'd by the *Encouragement* of the *Great*.

A Man that would *succeed* in any of these *Arts*, must have his Mind pretty much at Ease, and be consequently in tolerable Circumstances, and Master of his own Time, that he may find Leisure to *finish* his Works as they ought to be. *Poetry*, especially, is not to be look'd on as a Trade, or Profession to

get ones Bread by; but is to be follow'd only on favourable Occaſions for Pleaſure, and Entertainment. The *Poet* ſhould have Recourſe to his *Muſe*, as to a *Miſtreſs*, when *Inclination* invites him; he may then hope for more *beautiful* Productions, than when he is inſlav'd to his *Art* by a ſtrict *Neceſſity*; but we find on the contrary, that this, which ſhould be but a generous *Amuſement*, becomes too often the *Refuge* of any needy *Scribler*, who has the leaſt Pretence to dabble in *Poetry*, and will venture to hurry out his *unfiniſh'd* Labours upon the good natur'd *Town*, letting the World know, how *ſoon*, and *eaſily* they were perform'd, as if there was a *real* Merit in *Precipitation*. We find, on the other Hand, ſome Vaunts of the *contrary* Practice amongſt the *Ancients*. *Catullus* tells us in Commendation of his Friend *Hel. Cinna*, that a *Piece* of his was *nine* Years in finiſhing. *Horace* in his Art of *Poetry*, blames the *Writers* of his Time for their Want of *Patience* to finiſh their *Works*, and there can be no greater Proof of the Juſtneſs of his Reprehenſion, than that not any of their *Labours* have *liv'd* long enough, for us to ſee their *Errors*.

Thus *Poetry* has ſuffer'd in the Opinion of many People from the *unworthy* Profeſſors of it; but to contemn *Poetry*, is to condemn, in Effect, the *Taſtes* of the moſt learned

ned, polite, and greateſt Men in all Ages; for ſuch, from all *Antiquity*, have lov'd and encourag'd this, and the other fine *Arts*, and have oftentimes themſelves profeſs'd it; nor was it out of a fooliſh Admiration of jingling *Numbers*, and little *Points*; but thro' a laudable Love, and Reſpect, for Reaſon, Morality, great, and beautiful Sentiments that the *Ancients* ſo much encourag'd *Poetry*, and its Profeſſors, who were generally Perſons of Merit, and Learning, and liv'd up to the *Maxims*, they taught. The *Poets* who have writ *judiciouſly*, have led their Lives with *Judgment* too; it was as conſpicuous in their Manners, and Way of living, as in their *Works*; and, if *Horace* may be rely'd on, it is neceſſary that a good *Poet* be a *Philoſopher*. *Poetry* then ſhould not be charged with the *Faults* of ſome, who have *diſgraced* it: Whoever will conſider it in its proper *Light*, will not find it ſo contemptible a Thing, as they would have it paſs for, who know nothing of its *Worth*, and *Beauties*, the Ignorance of which is very common, notwithſtanding that almoſt every Body thinks he has a Right to judge of, and meddle with *Poetry*; and it is remarkably ſurprizing, that ſome of the moſt *learned* Men and moſt *knowing* in other Parts of *Literature*, ſhould have been ſo *blind*, and *deceived* in the Judgments they have made of *Poetry*. Conſidering theſe Things,

it

it is not much to be wonder'd at, that there ſhould be ſo many *lame* Productions in this *Art*, in which it is ſo difficult to ſucceed well with all the Advantages of *Nature*, and *Study*; as the *few* excellent Performances in it may witneſs.

If *Poets*, and *Painters* are to propoſe the *Idea* of *perfect* Nature for their *Imitation*, it is abſolutely neceſſary that they attain to that *Idea*; and how is that *Idea* to be acquir'd, but by ſtudying the *Perfections* both of the *Body*, and the *Mind?* And where are theſe *Perfections* found in ſuch Excellence, and Abundance as in the Works of the *Ancients?* In the Statues, Bas-relieves, and precious *Relicts* of the great Maſters of old, and in the *Writings* of thoſe learned Philoſophers, Poets, and Hiſtorians, who have drawn the *Manners* and *Sentiments* of Mankind with the ſame Majeſty, and Juſtneſs, as theſe great *Painters* did their *exterior* Forms, and the *viſible* Beauties of *Nature?* But why, ſay ſome People, muſt we have Recourſe to *Antiquity?* Have we not our *Organs* as perfect as the *Ancients* had? And is it unreaſonable to ſuppoſe, that we may have *Ideas* as great, as beautiful, as juſt, and ſurprizing as they had? It may be true, that we have the ſame *Faculties*, and *Power* inherent in our Natures; and that they have thought wrong, who have imagin'd, that *Nature* herſelf, thro' her

long

long Operations, is become *tir'd*, and *decay'd*, and that now, in her *Weakneſs*, ſhe throws out *imperfect* Creatures, and *weak* Minds. This yet is certain, that Mankind has every Age invented new Things, loſt ſome *Arts*, and found out others, and that there has been a conſtant *Revolution*, and *Succeſſion* of *Arts*, as of every Thing elſe; but that the *Ancients* were more excellent than we in moſt Parts of theſe *Arts* of *Ornament*, is as manifeſt, as that *latter* Ages have invented many *uſeful Things* entirely unknown to them. That Majeſty, that Truth, or Juſtneſs, that beautiful Simplicity, and natural Grace, ſo peculiar to the *Ancients*, are rarely to be met with in any Degree amongſt the *Moderns*, and never but amongſt ſuch of them, as have imitated *Antiquity*; for it has been the *Fate* of theſe *latter* Ages, to *refine* ſo much upon *Nature*, that they have quite *loſt Sight* of her, and that not only in Relation to theſe *Arts* in Queſtion; but in almoſt *every* Thing elſe. The *Ancients* endeavour'd to *improve Nature*; we ſeem, on the contrary, to ſtrive to *hide her* as much as is poſſible; they conſulted *Nature* in her ſelf, and conſidering, in general, what ſhe *could*, and *ought* to do, they copy'd her *Perfections*; nor was this ſo beautiful *Simplicity* of the *Ancients* confin'd to theſe *Arts*; but diffus'd it ſelf thro' their *Manners*; nor ſhould we, perhaps, have had any *Idea* of it at all;

but

but from what Remains we have found of it in their Works. Where theſe *Arts* chiefly flouriſh'd, the *Genius* of the People, their Government, and, perhaps, their Climate, and Situation, together with the Turn of their Pleaſures, and taſte of their great Men, all ſeem'd to favour the *Advancement* of theſe *Arts*, to which may be added, their Religion, Superſtition, and natural Love of the *Marvelous*. The *Scene* which is now carrying on upon the *Theatre* of what we call the *Polite World*, is of quite a different Nature from what it was in thoſe Days; and Increaſe of *Luxury*, and new *Inventions* have made, at preſent, ſo many Things neceſſary, which then were either held ſuperfluous, or quite unknown, that the Condition of our Affairs ſeem to put Men rather upon providing for the *Conveniencies* of Life, than to afford them *Leiſure*, to *finiſh* any conſiderable Work in theſe *Arts*, as it ought to be; or Opportunity of thinking *juſtly*, and *ſublimely* of Things which are chiefly intended for *Ornament*; and in an *Age* where Men are more diſtinguiſh'd by their *Acquiſitions*, than by any real *Merit* of their own, there is a certain Pride, and Ambition in *accumulating*, which knows no Bounds, and neceſſarily introduces *mercenary* Views, and ſuch *narrow* Ways of Thinking, as *ſtifle* in the Mind all *Greatneſs* of Thought, and *Love* of theſe *Studies*.

Indolence

Indolence, and *Sloth*, the Effects of *Luxury*, and *Eaſe*, are equally prejudicial to theſe *Arts*, and have brought on a Neglect of *Study*, and all *Rules*, by which Means ſo many *imperfect*, and *unfiniſh'd* Performances in every one of theſe *Arts* are Daily precipitated into the *World*; and, what is worſe, they who ſend theſe *lame* Productions ſo untimely abroad, not content to have tranſgreſs'd againſt all Sorts of *Rules* themſelves, endeavour, as much as they can, to hinder others from following them, by deſcrying them as vain, and uſeleſs, in order to *ſupport* their own *Errors:* They have endeavour'd to laugh away all *Rules*, and baniſh the *Truth* of *Arts* from amongſt us; and Men are eaſily drawn from the *Practice* of what gives them any Proſpect of *Trouble* in the *Purſuit:* We find it as difficult to ſubmit our *Fancies*, as our *Paſſions* to any *Regimen*; and the Misfortune is, that they, who have the *brighteſt* Imaginations, are generally the moſt *impatient* of *Rules*, and thus our greateſt *Genius's* are, in a Manner, *overthrown* by their own *Strength.* There is a Kind of native *Liberty* in *Fancy*, which abhors the Chain of *Rules*, and Management of *Art*; yet it is not in human Nature to *perfect* any Thing without ſome *Labour*, and *Patience*; but theſe *Precepts* they deſpiſe, are ſo founded upon *Nature*, that it is only by the Knowledge, and Obſervation of them, that they muſt

at laſt, if ever, compaſs, what they are ſuppoſed, to intend, *viz.* to work with *Eaſe*, and *Surety*. Many, who might be *excellent*, dare not, becauſe they know not *preciſely* what they ought to do; for a juſt *Confidence* is to be got only from a thorough *Knowledge* of the *Beauties* of the *Art*, and of the *Faults* that may be committed againſt it. This would, perhaps, be a Means, to cure that *Diffidence* which is moſt commonly found with thoſe of the beſt *Parts:* This would hinder them, from *diſcreetly blotting* out ſometimes the moſt *ſublime* Things they have writ, and the *boldeſt* Strokes of the *Pencil.*

The Study of theſe *Arts* ſhould be begun *early*, nor are the *Arts* themſelves to be proſecuted in that Stage of Life in which the Mind may be reaſonably ſuppos'd to have loſt much of its *Strength* and *Vigour*. That natural *Force* of *Imagination*, that *Fire*, or rather *Enthuſiaſm*, ſo neceſſary to the perfect *Execution* of theſe *Arts*, is not eaſily curb'd, and kept in Order by the Reſtraint of wholſome *Rules* in the Time of our *Youth*, or maintain'd to any Degree of Perfection, when old *Age* creeps upon us. *Longinus* diſcovers *Homer*'s Decline in his *Odyſſes*, and we have more than one Example, amongſt our *Poets*, of Authors, who have *ſurviv'd* their own *Genius.*

Temperance is as neceſſary as any Thing elſe to him who would perform in either of

theſe *Arts* to a Degree of Perfection. *Horace*, who introduces *Bacchus* teaching *Verſe*, and favourable to *Poetry*, and the *Muſes*, knew well, that cool *Reflection*, and *Patience* are requir'd, to *finiſh* any *conſiderable Deſign*; and however debauch'd *Petronius* may appear himſelf to have been, he is too good a *Critick*, not to have preſcrib'd *Regularity* to the Perſon, who means to *write* any Thing to purpoſe; this *Virtue* was obſerved by the ancient *Sculptors*, and *Painters*, to mention only the famous *Protogenes*, who, when he ſat about any *Work*, he was reſolv'd to ſucceed in, lived, 'tis ſaid, only upon *Lupines*, leſt he ſhould have *blunted* his *Faculties* by too high a *Diet*. *Wine*, indeed, may work upon the Mind, like a Kind of *Enthuſiaſtic* Rage, in *Starts*, and broken *Raptures*; but it muſt be by meer *Accident*, if it produces any Thing that Way, that wants not a great deal of *Correction*. It is unſafe truſting to the *Fancy* at any Time; but much more ſo, when *heighten'd* and *ſtretch'd* beyond its natural *Pitch* by the Fumes of intoxicating Liquor.

Theſe *Arts* anciently met with more *Encouragement* from *Great Men* than they do at preſent: They took a *Pride* in thoſe Days in the *Knowledge* of them, and *reſpected*, and *honour'd* thoſe who *profeſs'd* them; and formerly only ſuch as were of *noble* Extraction, had Permiſſion to exerciſe the *Art* of *Paint-*

ing. The *Profeſſors* of theſe *Arts* ſhould be *protected*, and *countenanced*, in Order to inſpire them with ſuch *noble*, and *generous* Thoughts, as they ought to have. Men of *baſe*, and *ſervile* Sentiments can never produce any Thing *great*, and worthy of *Poſterity* in any of theſe *Arts*; and the Company of People of *low*, and *narrow* Minds ought to be avoided by them, as *contagious*: They ſhould *imitate* nothing but what is *perfect*, and ſet the beſt *Patterns* before their Eyes. The *Ancients* ſeem'd in ſome Meaſure to preſcribe this *Rule* to *Nature* her ſelf, while they contrived to place the moſt *beautiful Statues*, and *Pictures* before their teeming *Matrons*, as tho' they intended thereby to *reſtore* thoſe *Excellencies* to *Nature*, which they had originally *borrow'd* of her. This may ſerve to put *Artiſts* in Mind, that they may receive no ſmall Aſſiſtance from good *Examples*, and the aſſiduous *Contemplation* of the *Works* of the *Ancients*, while they would *form* their Minds to the *Production* of *great*, and *beautiful* Things. It ſhould be their conſtant Care, to treaſure up the *Perfections* of *Nature* in their *Memories*, that they may bring forth Nothing themſelves but what is truly *perfect*. But how few are capable of perceiving the Perfections of *Nature?* Such alone are qualified either for *judging* of, or *exerciſing* the *Siſter Arts*; but this *Idea* of *perfect Nature* is to be *improv'd*, if

not *entirely gain'd* by long *Study*, and *Familiarity* with the *fine* Works of the *Ancients*, and by *dwelling* on their ſeveral *Beauties*.

Thus we have taken a *curſory* Survey of theſe *Arts*; ſaid ſomething, *in general*, of their *Relation*, and *Difference*; of their *Value*, *Riſe*, and *Progreſs*; of the Neceſſity, Conformity, and Practice of the *principal Rules* by which they were brought to *Perfection*; whence it is they have *decay'd*; and how they may be *reſtor'd*.

F I N I S.

not merely gain'd by long Study, and Familiarity with the fine Works of the Ancients, and by dwelling on their Several Beauties.

Thus we have taken a cursory Survey of these Arts; said something in general, of their Relation, and Difference; of their Value, Rule, and Progress; of the Necessity, Conformity, and Practice of the Principal Rules by which they were brought to Perfection; whence it is they have decay'd; and how they may be re-